

Good afternoon.

My name is Dr. Lenworth Jacobs.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak to you today.

I am a practicing trauma surgeon and Director of Trauma and Emergency Medicine at Hartford Hospital and the Director of the Trauma Center at Hartford Hospital and the Connecticut Children's Medical Center. I am the Chairman of the Department of Traumatology and Emergency Medicine at the University of Connecticut School of Medicine.

In 1993, I was appointed, by the Governor, to the Board of Trustees of the University of Connecticut. I am currently the Vice Chairman of the Board and the Chairman of the Academic Affairs Committee. I chair the Trauma Committee for the State of Connecticut and sit on the Emergency Management and Homeland Security Coordinating Council.

I am responsible for LIFE STAR, the state's only critical care helicopter service. The Emergency Department treats more patients in a year than the entire population of Hartford. That is 84,000 patients at the Hartford Hospital, 34,000 patients at the John Dempsey Hospital, and 47,000 patients at the Connecticut Children's Medical Center. We are a statewide public service and respond on a 24/7 basis to treat any patient regardless of their ability to pay.

We are the Center of Excellence for disaster preparedness for the northern tier of the state and are on continuous call to respond to any disaster at any time. As well as our extensive clinical responsibilities, I am also responsible for overseeing the education of medical students, residents, fellows, and the continuing education of physicians throughout the system. This opportunity provides me with a unique perspective on what it means to manage patients from the clinical, education, academic, and research viewpoints.

The department has graduated well over 100 emergency physicians the majority of whom serve in emergency departments throughout the State of Connecticut. We educate emergency medical technicians, paramedics, and flight nurses all of who provide service to thousands of patients.

An academic medical center and a university combine clinical excellence with academic and research initiatives. Important research questions are generated and answered which have a direct and immediate impact on patients.

This is the essence of having a clinical and academic staff working together for the patient and public good. This elevates the care we provide, it elevates the quality of the staff, and it builds a foundation for continued excellence for the future. It is through these opportunities that we have been able to attract and retain the best and brightest young students and physicians to come to and remain in the State of Connecticut.

By further aligning the research initiatives of the University of Connecticut with Hartford Hospital's tertiary and quaternary capabilities notably a Level I Trauma Center, LIFE STAR, Interventional Neuroradiology, and Disaster Management capabilities, we are empowering our students and attracting a different type of medical expert. These practitioners immediately serve the state, prevent an ongoing brain drain, develop job and investment opportunities for the state and positively enhance the care of all our citizens.

Today we are at a crossroads. We can continue to develop and invest in moving the University of Connecticut and the healthcare delivery hospitals to the top caregivers in the nation. Conversely, we have the potential to slip backwards to lose our ability to recruit and retain the best and the brightest young people and ultimately risk the closure of a hospital that is vital to its community and to the Health Center. This not only has a negative impact on clinical care, education, and research but also a negative impact on jobs in the healthcare industry. If this happens, we will not just be making a choice that impacts the near term, it will have far reaching impact for the next two decades, as it will take that long to rebuild the program.

I believe we have the ability and potential to make the region of Hartford a biomedical powerhouse competitive with our neighbors in adjoining states. This is a chance to move forward to the next level in medical care, education, and research.

Thank you.